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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to inform you that the French Government, desiring to participate in strengthening the activities of the States Members of the United Nations in regard to the protection of all human rights for everyone, has submitted its candidacy for re-election to the Human Rights Council in the elections to be held on 16 May 2008.

Please find attached a document setting out France's voluntary commitments with respect to human rights. France, which has never ceased to take practical action to promote human rights, undertakes to continue these efforts both domestically and internationally, in cooperation with all States Members of the United Nations.

I would be most grateful if you would arrange for the text of this letter and its annex to be issued as a General Assembly document.

(*Signed*) Jean-Maurice **Ripert**

08-29142 (E) 030408 070408

Annex to the letter dated 25 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Candidacy of France for elections to the Human Rights Council

Human rights are among the founding values of the French Republic. Respect for human rights is central to the exercise of democracy in France and to our commitment as a member of the European Union.

Having contributed from the outset to the work of the Commission on Human Rights and subsequently the Human Rights Council, *France is particularly attached to the international system for promoting and protecting human rights.* France has ratified the main international instruments relating to human rights and recognizes the competence of the treaty bodies to receive individual complaints. It is also a party to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols of 1977 and 2005.

France committed itself to the establishment of the Human Rights Council, the strengthening of the authority and resources of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the dissemination of human rights throughout the United Nations system. It has submitted consensus resolutions on arbitrary detention, enforced disappearances and extreme poverty to the Commission on Human Rights and later the Human Rights Council.

France promotes dialogue and cooperation in regard to human rights. To promote universal and interdependent human rights, France prefers engagement to isolation. It will continue to increase its voluntary contribution to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in order to encourage technical assistance. It wishes to continue to play a constructive role and to encourage dialogue on the grave situations examined by the United Nations.

It has issued a standing invitation to France to the special procedures of the United Nations. In 2005, it welcomed the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief and in 2007 the Independent expert on minority issues. Since 2002, it has specifically assigned an associate young expert to support the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders.

As a member of the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), France has recognized the competence of committees monitoring regional instruments. It receives visits from the independent institutions of those organizations, at their request, such as the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe (survey report in 2006, one-off visit in January 2008), the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (last visit, late 2006), the three representatives of the current OSCE Presidency responsible for combating anti-Semitism and discrimination against Muslims and Christians (2005), and electoral observer missions from the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (observation of the presidential elections in May 2007). It is also subject to the jurisdictional oversight of the European Court of Human Rights, that can be seized directly of any individual application pursuant to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

France is attached to the right of non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions to address the Human Rights Council and is attentive to respect of that right.

In accordance with its conception of the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights, and with its desire for fair and controlled globalization, *France is attached to the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights.* France accords particular importance to the realization of the right to development. Its commitment is expressed through co-development partnerships and cooperation agreements.

1. Since 2006, France has taken practical steps to promote human rights:

France's political commitment to human rights was reflected in the appointment in 2007 of a Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights and a High Commissioner for Active Solidarity, whose brief includes the fight against extreme poverty.

(a) *France promotes the respect in all circumstances of human life and dignity and of international law*, especially international standards relating to human rights and international humanitarian law.

- The procedure for ratifying the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance will be completed in 2008, in line with France's commitment in 2006. Having worked for the adoption of the Convention for more than 30 years, it hosted the ceremony to open the Convention for signature in Paris in 2007. France has promoted the creation of a "group of friends" of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance to encourage as many States as possible to ratify it and promptly bring it into effect.
- The procedure for ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment will be completed in 2008, in line with France's commitment in 2006. The national mechanism for the prevention of torture (a "controller general of places of deprivation of liberty") provided for in the Protocol was created by statute in 2007.
- France has brought its law into line with its diplomatic commitment to universal abolition of the death penalty by incorporating a ban on capital punishment into its Constitution. Thus, in 2007 it was able to ratify the second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and Protocol 13 to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms concerning the abolition of the death penalty in all circumstances.
- At the regional level, France also ratified the European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights in 2007 and the European Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in 2008.
- France has contributed to the establishment of a Human Rights Council that is as effective and legitimate as possible. It cooperates fully with the Human Rights Council and all United Nations investigation mechanisms and its action on human rights will be discussed from 2008 as part of the universal periodic

review, which it is endeavouring to publicize, inter alia by supporting seminars to promote the procedure.

- France promotes respect for international humanitarian law in armed conflicts and respect of the obligations on parties to a conflict to protect civilians, prisoners of war and the wounded. It supports the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). France is committed to the protection of journalists and other media professionals in situations of armed conflict in accordance with resolution 1738 (2006) adopted by the United Nations Security Council on the initiative of France among others.

- France substantially increased its contribution to the United Nations Democracy Fund in 2007, making it one of the top six contributors.

- France is implementing cooperation projects on human rights in some 30 countries worldwide, in association with local authorities and civil society. One such project is the result of a partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

(b) *France is committed to support victims of human rights violations*

- Concerned to combat the impunity of those who commit human rights violations, France has made a particular effort to promote international criminal justice and the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC). It is also committed to supporting the victims of human rights violations, especially in the framework of the ICC Trust Fund for Victims, to which France is the second largest contributor.

- In February 2007, France organized in Paris a conference with the title "Free Children from War" under the joint chairmanship of the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Director-General of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), at which the updated Cape Town Principles, known as the Paris Principles, were presented. To date, 66 countries have signed up to the Paris Commitments. In October 2007, France and UNICEF organized a ministerial follow-up meeting and announced the creation of a forum to monitor the Paris Commitments. It has also created posts for experts on the subject in its embassies.

- In 2007, it ratified the Hague Convention of 19 October 1996 on Jurisdiction, Applicable Law, Recognition, Enforcement and Cooperation in respect of Parental Responsibility and Measures for the Protection of Children.

- In accordance with its commitment in 2006, France has doubled its contribution to the United Nations Fund for Victims of Torture.

- It has supported an international seminar on the link between international justice and transitional justice organized by the United Nations Centre in Yaoundé.

- France, with other partners, was an instigator of the international solidarity levy on airline tickets, which nearly 30 countries have pledged to introduce. The scheme already generates an additional US$ 300 million for development.

(c) *France supports initiatives to combat all forms of discrimination*

- In accordance with the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, France has established a national High Authority to Combat Discrimination and Promote Equal Opportunity.
- France has withdrawn its reservation to article 5 (b) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- France has incorporated gender issues into its international cooperation and development activities, both as an objective in its own right and as a means of improving the effectiveness and scope of its actions in favour of achieving the Millennium Development Goals.
- France attaches great importance to combating violence against women, as illustrated by its submission of a specific resolution on the subject to the United Nations General Assembly for the last two years. It has entered into a large-scale regional partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).
- France wishes to work for dialogue between cultures and civilizations and for the promotion of tolerance and respect for individual liberties. In this regard, it has instituted the Mediterranean Cultural Workshop and supports initiatives like the Alliance of Civilizations.
- France has actively contributed to the completion of negotiations on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and has signed it.

2. France is committed to continuing and expanding its action for human rights both domestically and internationally

- In addition to a large-scale event in December 2008, France will host several significant events to commemorate the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- It is committed to promoting international human rights law and international humanitarian law within the United Nations, and in particular to:

– continuing its action on the Human Rights Council against enforced disappearances and arbitrary detention and in favour of the refusal of secret imprisonment and an absolute ban on torture and reaffirming its attachment to respect for human rights in the fight against terrorism in all the action it takes;

– ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the earliest opportunity and promoting it among other States in order to reaffirm the integral nature of the rights of any person, whatever his or her disability;

– supporting the process of drawing up an Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights with a view to improving the implementation of those rights, the reflection on extreme poverty and the work of the Special Rapporteur on human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises;

– continuing its commitment to the fight against the use of children in armed conflicts, within the framework of the Security Council Working Group set up on France's initiative and chaired by France; continuing to disseminate as

widely as possible the Paris Commitments on the non-recruitment, demobilization and reintegration of children affected by armed conflicts;

– continuing its efforts for the respect of all fundamental women's rights, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women, the representation of women in decision-making bodies and the recognition of their role in conflict prevention; examining the possibility of withdrawing its reservations to articles 14(2)(c) and 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

– working for the widest possible dissemination of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007;

– disseminating as widely as possible the United Nations Principles to combat impunity.

• It is committed to promoting the activity, defending the independence and strengthening the place of special procedures, treaty bodies and all oversight or investigation mechanisms relating to the human rights situation worldwide. Domestically, it will remain attentive to the recommendations of special procedures and treaty bodies, while continuing in particular, to improve, conditions of detention, enhance the efficiency of criminal procedure and pursue the policy of combating all forms of discrimination. It will cooperate fully with the universal periodic review procedure.

• It is committed to supporting the development of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the field, inter alia by helping to finance the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa.

• In accordance with resolution 62/149 adopted by the General Assembly on 18 December 2007, it will continue its action against use of the death penalty and for its universal abolition.

• Concerned to combat the impunity of those who commit human rights violations, it will continue its efforts to promote international criminal justice and the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC). The bill completing the adaptation of French legislation to the ICC Statute will become law in 2008. It will continue to work for recognition of the right to the truth and compensation for the victims of human rights violations.

• It will continue an ongoing dialogue with human rights defenders in France and elsewhere and will support their initiatives, greater protection for defenders under threat and the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on human rights defenders. It will increase its financial support for non-governmental organizations working for human rights, inter alia through a "call for human rights projects" to be issued in 2008. It will continue to support the action of defenders through the award of an annual Human Rights Prize of the French Republic.

• It will continue to encourage the broadest possible application of development initiatives such as the international solidarity levy on airline tickets.

• It is committed to continuing its activities in favour of democracy respectful of human rights and to supporting the United Nations Democracy Fund.

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Sixty-second session
Agenda item 54
Sustainable development

Letter dated 31 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you the Tashkent Declaration adopted on conclusions of the International Conference on the Aral Sea crisis and its impact on the gene pool, flora and fauna of the southern Aral Sea region, and international cooperation for mitigating consequences held in Tashkent on 11 and 12 March 2008 (see annex I), as well as the information on the Comprehensive Programme of Action proposed to foreign donors for implementation in order to mitigate consequences of climate change in the Aral Sea basin (see annex II).

I would appreciate it if you could circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 54.

(*Signed*) Alisher Vohidov
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan

08-29214 (E) 070408 070408

Annex I to the letter dated 31 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Russian]

Outcome document

Tashkent Declaration of the International Conference on the problems of the Aral Sea, their impact on the population gene pool and on flora and fauna, and international cooperation to mitigate their consequences

The participants of the International Conference have adopted the following Declaration on the environmental crisis in the Aral Sea region and international cooperation to mitigate its consequences.

1. The outcome of the International Conference has confirmed once again that poor water resource management over the past 50 years, which has given rise to a change in the flow pattern of the Amudarya and Syrdarya rivers, has caused one of the greatest man-made disasters in recent history — the drying-up of the Aral Sea. As a result, a complex set of environmental, socio-economic and demographic problems has arisen in the Aral Sea region, which, in terms of their origin and the scale of the consequences, are of an international and global nature.

2. The danger of a deterioration of the situation in the Aral Sea crisis zone may increase significantly and rapidly if the quantity of water flowing into the Aral Sea decreases further or remains uneven. The glaciers in the Pamir and Tyan-Shan mountain ranges have lost 25 per cent of their ice supply in the past 50 years, and this process is intensifying. Combined with the problem of poor water resources management, this may lead to an expansion of the disaster zone, an increase in the area of salinized land unsuitable for agricultural use and habitation, and a loss of employment and income for millions of inhabitants. It will also result in fresh losses of flora and fauna in the Aral Sea region. Preventing a deterioration of the situation in the Aral Sea region is an integral part of the economic, social, environmental and other aspects of regional security not only for all the States of Central Asia but also for neighbouring countries.

3. In this context, issues relating to the reasonable use of water resources from the region's transboundary rivers acquire particular importance: the approach to the use of water resources, in particular transboundary river water, and decisions in that regard, must be well thought out in the interests of all countries and peoples living in the region.

In accordance with key international legal instruments, including the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (1992) and the Convention on the Law of the Non-navigational Uses of International Watercourses (1997), which establish the basic principles for the use of transboundary rivers, the States of the region must, in their respective territories, strive to ensure that transboundary rivers are used in an equitable and reasonable way and take appropriate measures to prevent the causing of significant harm to other watercourse States.

4. The efforts made by the Governments of the Central Asian States and the international community in the past 15 years have brought a number of positive results which have made it possible to mitigate somewhat the consequences of the Aral Sea crisis for the population, flora and fauna of the disaster zone. However, the scale and intensity of this assistance has decreased significantly in recent years. Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan — the countries primarily affected by the consequences of the disaster — are experiencing substantial difficulties in overcoming the consequences of this major disaster.

5. The Conference participants express their deep gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the German Society for Technical Cooperation and other international organizations for their new initiatives to identify and develop effective means and mechanisms for mitigating the consequences of the environmental crisis in the Aral Sea region, providing the population with social and economic protection and preserving and restoring biodiversity.

6. The Conference participants draw attention to the need for the strictest parsimony and efficiency in the use of water resources in the region, both as drinking water and for agricultural purposes; the need to prevent unnecessary losses of water in the course of delivery to consumers, including losses caused by the introduction of new irrigation technologies; the need to implement projects for the reconstruction of water supply systems and irrigation networks, the reconstruction of collection and drainage networks and the establishment of new ones, and the technical upgrading of pumping facilities; the need for universal availability of instruments for gauging water use; and the need to enhance the activities of institutions that manage water resources.

7. On the basis of the issues discussed, the Conference participants consider the main priorities of the international community and the Central Asian countries to be the following:

The provision of assistance to the regions in the Aral Sea environmental disaster zone in order to protect the population gene pool, enhance people's health and improve their access to clean drinking water, raise the standard of sanitation and hygiene, reduce the incidence of disease and the child and maternal mortality rates, and improve environmental protection;

The provision of assistance with the sustainable management of transboundary rivers and prevention of an artificial reduction in the volume and flow of transboundary rivers into the Aral Sea, which could exacerbate the environmental situation in the Aral Sea region and the health and living conditions of the millions of people who inhabit the region;

The provision of assistance to the countries of the region which use transboundary river water for drinking and irrigation purposes to help them use those water resources effectively by reducing unnecessary losses, introducing advanced irrigation technologies and taking an integrated approach to water resource management so as to achieve the necessary balance between the need to

preserve and restore the functions of the fragile ecosystem of the Aral Sea region and other needs, including agricultural and industrial needs;

The implementation of measures to curb desertification and soil salinization through the planting of forests, rehabilitation of the waters in the Amudarya delta and other agrotechnical and special measures in the environmental disaster zone;

Creation of the conditions for increased employment and income growth in the environmental disaster zone through the development of small businesses, particularly industrial and agricultural operations requiring little water and service sector businesses, and the enhancement of farming methods, which could improve food supply, increase farmers' income and improve quality.

8. The Conference participants call on international donors and sponsors to consider the Comprehensive Action Programme annexed to the present Declaration, which is being proposed to international organizations, financial institutions, foreign countries and other donors for implementation with a view to mitigating the consequences of climate change in the Aral Sea region.

Annex II to the letter dated 31 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Uzbekistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information on the Comprehensive Action Programme proposed to foreign donors for implementation with a view to mitigating the consequences of climate change in the Aral Sea region

The Programme includes proposals for the implementation of 101 projects totalling $1,428,730,000.

These include projects in the following areas:

1. **Drinking water supply and development of public utilities — 13 projects totalling $266.6 million**

These projects provide for improved access to clean drinking water for the population of the Aral Sea region by means of reconstruction, expansion and development of water supply systems and networks, water intake facilities, distillation plants, etc., as well as sanitation and the reconstruction and development of sewerage networks.

2. **Improvement of the condition of reclaimed land — 20 projects totalling $483,770,000**

These projects provide for improvement of the condition of reclaimed land in the environmental disaster zone by establishing new collection and drainage networks and reconstructing and expanding existing ones, rehabilitating pumping and irrigation systems, enhancing water management and accounting systems, and restoring the wetlands in the Amudarya river delta.

3. **Enhancement of the health-care system — 20 projects totalling $173.6 million**

These projects provide for assistance to the environmental disaster regions with regard to the improvement of access to health-care services, including medical diagnostic services; the implementation of programmes for early identification and treatment of socially significant diseases among the population of the Aral Sea region; increased provision of resources and equipment to health-care institutions for the treatment of children and of socially significant diseases; and the strengthening of the population gene pool.

4. **Education and science — six projects totalling $18,160,000**

This component includes projects for the development of an environmental culture among students in the Aral Sea region, increased public awareness of environmental problems and support for research institutions carrying out pure and applied scientific research on the problems of the Aral Sea region.

5. **Job creation — 10 projects totalling $70.2 million**

This component includes projects for the provision of social support to enable the population to access microfinance; the development of industrial processing of agricultural products; the development of cattle and poultry farming in remote areas of the Aral Sea region; and the establishment of farms specializing in pond fish

culture, including support for the acquisition of materials for the rearing of highly productive and well-adapted breeds. A number of projects are aimed at large-scale recruitment of temporarily unemployed people for paid work to establish and upgrade protected "green belts" in the desertification area of the Aral Sea region, the establishment of greenhouse farms using energy-saving technologies, and the development of environmental tourism services.

6. **Gender development — two projects totalling $20.0 million**

These projects are aimed at the implementation of a programme of service sector development for unemployed women in the environmental disaster zone and the development of training centres for women entrepreneurs.

7. **Transport infrastructure development — two projects totalling $103 million**

These projects involve the upgrading of individual sections of the Guzar-Bukhara-Nukus-Beineu highway and the upgrading of roads and construction of new roads in the remaining district *khokimiyats*.

8. **Desertification control and environmental protection — 20 projects totalling $49.1 million**

These projects are aimed at the development of a single scientific blueprint for forest reclamation on the dry Aral Sea bed using the latest forest-planting methods; the establishment of protected planted forests, native woody plants and brushwood on the dry Aral Sea bed in degraded desert sand areas; reduction of the impact of domestic wastewater from rural populated areas on the environment; restoration of the environmental sustainability and biological productivity of aquatic ecosystems in the southern Aral Sea region; improvement of social and living conditions for the inhabitants of the Aral Sea region and reduction of environmental pollution; preservation of the unique ecosystems of the Ustyurt plateau in the Republic of Karakalpakstan; introduction of biogas plants for supplying gas to local sparsely populated areas; improvement of the environment and acquisition of highly effective biofertilizers; establishment of a nursery for rare and endangered animal and plant species of the southern Aral Sea region; establishment of protected natural territories encompassing the Sudochye and Zhyltyrbas lakes with a view to including them in the Ramsar List of Wetlands of International Importance; development of a system for managing the wetlands in the Amudarya delta; and stabilization of the water and hydrochemical regime in the lake system in the Syrdarya river basin (modelled on the Aidar-Arnasai lake system).

9. **Development and introduction of alternative energy sources and clean development mechanism (CDM) projects — eight projects totalling $244.3 million**

These include projects for the construction of cogeneration plants, wind-solar power plants for autonomous electricity supply to remote villages and rural hospitals, solar collectors for heating water in rural hospitals, schools and private households, wind generators connected to low-load networks in the energy system supplying remote areas, biogas plants for heat and power generation on farms, and the composting of solid domestic waste.

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Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

Note verbale dated 17 March 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

The Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations presents its compliments to the President of the United Nations General Assembly and, with reference to its note 199, dated 11 June 2007, which announced Brazil's candidature to the Human Rights Council, has the honour to enclose a record of the voluntary pledges and commitments of the Government of Brazil to the promotion and protection of human rights, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251 (see annex). The Permanent Mission of Brazil would highly appreciate it if the present note and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

08-29126 (E) 070408

Annex to the note verbale dated 17 March 2008 from the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Brazil's voluntary pledges vis-à-vis the Human Rights Council

I – PARTICIPATION IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (HRC)

Brazil has always been committed to ensuring the universal application of human rights, bearing in mind the risks of politicization and selectivity inherent in addressing the human rights situations in specific countries. That concern inspired the Brazilian proposal, presented during the institutional building process of the HRC, of adopting substantive criteria to consider resolutions about countries, based on information obtained from treaty-monitoring bodies, special procedures and the complaint mechanism. Although the institutional framework of the HRC provides for other measures to reduce the risks of politicization and selectivity regarding the human rights situations in specific countries, Brazil will remain alert to this concern, without disregarding the actual human rights situation on the ground.

With regard to the importance of the HRC reviewing the human rights situation in any specific country, Brazil wishes to reiterate the importance it attributes to implementing the Universal Periodic Review Mechanism (UPR). Such mechanism bears a resemblance to the Brazilian proposal on a global human rights report, which was submitted on various occasions to the former Commission on Human Rights. Brazil will be the ninth member state to be evaluated by the new mechanism, in April 2008, and will participate in this exercise in a transparent and constructive manner. Brazil is convinced that the UPR will strengthen the principles of universality, indivisibility and non-selectivity in considering the human rights situations throughout the world. Brazil will undertake its best efforts to ensure that this exercise produces recommendations that are sensitive to the need for strengthening institutions in the country under review, thus acting as a catalyst for actions of dialogue and cooperation conducted under the aegis of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Brazil remains committed to contributing to the process of reviewing the special procedures created by the former Commission on Human Rights. This commitment is illustrated by the Brazilian proposal, approved during the Sixth Ordinary Session of the HRC, to renew and broaden the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Right of Everyone to the Enjoyment of the Highest Attainable Standard of Physical and Mental Health. In the debates concerning the review of mandates, Brazil's actions will continue to be guided by its concerns with both avoiding any gaps in protecting human rights and conferring visibility and meaningfulness on the mandates already approved.

Brazil remains ready to contribute to initiatives carried out by the Human Rights Council within the framework of the World Program for Human Rights Education, as well as in the field of international cooperation on human rights.

After the creation of the National Committee for Human Rights Education, in 2003, Brazil prepared its National Plan for Human Rights Education, in consultation with civil society organizations. The actions under that Plan will gain new impetus with the commemorations, in 2008, of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In addition, in the area of international cooperation on human rights, an office for international cooperation was created under the Special Secretariat for Human Rights, within the Office of the President of Brazil. This office is engaged in identifying opportunities for cooperation in this area, by both receiving and providing assistance, bilaterally and trilaterally. Moreover, concerning international cooperation, Brazil is well aware that it is necessary to pursue such cooperation in a manner that does not impose requirements or conditions, since initiatives undertaken in this area can only be fully successful if the State that benefits from the cooperation is fully engaged.

II – THE RELATIONSHIP WITH INTERNATIONAL MECHANISMS FOR MONITORING, PROMOTING AND PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Brazil's preparation of its first UPR report brought about useful and critical dialogue among the government authorities involved in its preparation and representatives of civil society. As one of the first results of that dialogue, the Brazilian government decided to begin preparing annual reports about the human rights situation in Brazil. It is also worth noting the effort undertaken by Brazil to create a national system of indicators to monitor the degree to which human rights are respected, a tool that Brazil considers essential to better guide the formulation and application of policies to promote and protect such rights.

Since December 10, 2001, Brazil has extended a standing invitation for all thematic special rapporteurs and independent experts of the current Human Rights Council to visit Brazil. Since then, Brazil has maintained a constructive dialogue with these mandate holders. Since 1998, eleven rapporteurs have visited Brazil. In order to strengthen the dialogue with these special procedures, Brazil has pledged to intensify the follow-up actions on the recommendations that arise from this dialogue.

Brazil is also committed to strengthening its relationship with treaty-monitoring bodies by preparing periodic reports addressed to these committees, as well as following up on the recommendations issued by them. Brazil understands that building a national system of human rights indicators will facilitate the achievement of these goals.

III – PREPARATION OF AND ADHERENCE TO INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

In accordance with the pledges made when presenting its candidacy for the Human Rights Council in 2006, Brazil supported the completion by the HRC of the draft International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from

Enforced Disappearance, having been one of the first countries to sign this agreement, on February 7, 2007. Similarly, Brazil supported completion of the negotiations and signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol, on March 30, 2007. Both instruments have already been forwarded to the Brazilian Congress, where they are being reviewed with the aim of completing the ratification process.

Brazil has supported the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, both during the process that led to its approval by the Human Rights Council in June 2006 and when the final version of the Declaration was adopted by the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly in September 2007.

Brazil attributes great importance to the HRC activities for the development of international human rights law and will continue to pledge its support to the negotiation of international agreements that will close any possible protection gaps that may exist internationally. Brazil has participated with interest, in this context, in the Working Group that is preparing the draft Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

In accordance with the voluntary pledge made on the occasion of its candidacy to the HRC in 2006, Brazil deposited, in January 2007, its instrument of ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. In the same area, Brazil is considering recognizing the competence of the Human Rights Committee to receive and review individual complaints of violations of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), as provided for in its First Optional Protocol.

Brazil is also considering adhering to the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the Abolition of the Death Penalty. Such an adherence would reflect the provisions of the Brazilian Federal Constitution of 1988, which prohibits the death penalty in Brazil, which in any case had not been carried out in the country since 1876. In 1998, Brazil ratified the Protocol to the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights concerning the Abolition of the Death Penalty. Brazil was one of the co-sponsors of resolution A/RES/62/149, regarding the adoption of a moratorium on carrying out the death penalty, which was the first such document to address this topic within the United Nations General Assembly.

IV – BRAZIL'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OHCHR)

Brazil will continue to support the activities of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. The High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs. Louise Arbour, visited Brazil in December 2007. That visit made it possible to enhance dialogue and identify new opportunities for partnership and cooperation between Brazil and the OHCHR.

In 2007, in partnership with the OHCHR, Brazil hosted an International Seminar on Human Rights and Military Justice, a topic that is now the subject of a cooperation initiative between Brazil and East Timor. In June 2008, Brazil will also host the Regional Conference in preparation for the Durban Review Conference, in partnership with the OHCHR. Another topic that may be of interest for dialogue and cooperation initiatives is the work that the OHCHR has also been carrying out with regard to preparing systems of human rights indicators.

Of particular interest to Brazil are the preparations to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Domestically, Brazil will sponsor a series of events and actions aimed at raising awareness among public officials and civil society on the range of topics related to human rights and at strengthening the mechanisms necessary to protect them. In addition to these actions, Brazil is convinced of the importance of providing greater visibility to this topic internationally, which inspired the Brazilian proposal—adopted by the HRC in its Sixth Ordinary Session—to engage the Council in preparing a set of voluntary international human rights goals.

V – STRENGTHENING THE REGIONAL SYSTEMS FOR PROMOTING AND PROTECTING HUMAN RIGHTS

Brazil will continue to work for the strengthening of the Inter-American Human Rights System. Brazil is one of the main advocates of a draft Inter-American Convention against Racism and all Forms of Discrimination, which is currently being prepared. It is engaged in the discussions under the Organization of American States aimed at reforming the regulations and strengthening the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Brazil has also maintained an active dialogue with both the Commission and the Court in following up on claims of human rights violations in Brazil.

Brazil will seek to strengthen cooperation and political dialogue on human rights with the Mercosul member countries and associated states, within the framework of the Meetings of High Level Human Rights and Foreign Affairs Authorities of Mercosul. Brazil will also encourage cooperation and political dialogue on human rights within the Union of South American Nations (UNASUL).

Even though Brazil's engagement in all regional and international mechanisms for the protection of human rights reflects Brazil's commitment to promoting human rights both domestically and internationally, Brazil still faces challenges in fully implementing human rights and pledges to improve the political and regulatory frameworks that are necessary to achieve this goal.

In this spirit, Brazil has begun preparations to draft the III National Human Rights Program, a process that will culminate in holding the XI National Conference on Human Rights, in December 2008, after a wide-ranging consultation process involving civil society. Brazil will continue to attribute an essential role to the participation of civil society in this context, in which the

mobilization of and critical feedback from civil society will be essential not only for updating the National Human Rights Program, but also for enhancing the means and capabilities necessary for improving the protection of human rights throughout Brazil."

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Agenda item 113 (d)
Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections: election of fifteen members of the Human Rights Council

Letter dated 31 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to inform you that the Government of Sri Lanka has decided to present its candidature for membership of the Human Rights Council for the term 2008-2011 in the elections to be held during the sixty-second session of the General Assembly.

Sri Lanka's initial two-year term as a member of the Council will expire in May 2008. During its two-year term, Sri Lanka has played an active role in the institution-building process of the Council as Chair of the Asian Group and presently serves as one of its Vice-Chairs. Sri Lanka now seeks an opportunity to serve a full term to continue its role of contributing in a constructive and cooperative manner to the work of the Council.

In this regard, I have the honour to enclose, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 60/251, an aide-memoire outlining voluntary pledges and commitments by Sri Lanka that reiterate Sri Lanka's long-standing commitment to the promotion and protection of all human rights for all (see annex).

It would be appreciated if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Prasad **Kariyawasam**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 31 March 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

Voluntary pledges and commitments by Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is seeking re-election to the Human Rights Council at the elections to be held at the UN General Assembly in New York in May 2008.

Sri Lanka, one of the oldest democracies in the region, has had a long tradition of promoting and protecting human rights. Universal franchise was introduced in Sri Lanka in 1931. The Constitution of Sri Lanka enshrines Sri Lanka's commitment to human rights by guaranteeing to its citizens, fundamental rights, which include freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom from torture; right to equality; freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and punishment, and prohibition of retroactive penal legislation. In addition, every citizen is entitled to freedom of speech, assembly, association, occupation, and movement.

Since Independence, successive Governments have accorded priority to comprehensive health and education systems, resulting in high social indicators that have placed Sri Lanka at the top of the regional human development index. Despite facing the unprecedented challenges of a massive natural disaster, namely the tsunami of December 2004, and the persistent scourge of terrorism, average economic growth is expected to be over 6% in 2007. This has enabled Sri Lanka to disburse the benefits of development to a large cross section of the population. Demonstrating its resilience, Sri Lanka has also substantially recovered from the destruction wrought by the tsunami – an important achievement for a country in the lower middle income range.

Sri Lanka has undertaken international legal obligations by becoming party to the seven core human rights treaties, namely, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (CMW).

In addition, Sri Lanka is also a State Party to the following Optional Protocols: First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

Against Women; and Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict; and on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

In 2007, Sri Lanka also signed the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and is currently engaged in enacting necessary legislative and administrative measures to give effect to the provisions of the Convention and ensure the fulfilment of the rights of persons with disabilities. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Act No 56 of 2007 (the ICCPR Act) was passed by the Parliament in October 2007 to give effect to specific articles of the Covenant. The ICCPR Act fills lacunae in the existing domestic legislation. The Government of Sri Lanka has in place enabling legislation to give effect to the Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child, on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography.

Apart from fulfilling reporting obligations to treaty bodies, Sri Lanka has followed a consistent policy of cooperation as well as open and constructive engagement with the special procedures mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights as well as the Human Rights Council. Such cooperation and engagement is demonstrated by the extension of regular invitations to such mechanisms to undertake visits to Sri Lanka. During 2007, Sri Lanka facilitated visits by the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel and, inhuman or degrading treatment of punishment, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Secretary-General's Representative on the human rights of internally displaced persons. In addition, the UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator also undertook a visit to Sri Lanka during 2007.

Sri Lanka has opened itself to scrutiny of multiple international mechanisms on the belief that openness and accountability, through international means, can strengthen national efforts at promoting and protecting all human rights. Accordingly, Sri Lanka has committed itself to examination during the 2nd session of the first cycle of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism of the Human Rights Council in May 2008 as a further demonstration of our openness to fair and objective scrutiny by the Council.

As a manifestation of its commitment to engage with the international community in ensuring the promotion and protection of human rights of all its citizens, Sri Lanka established an International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP), a unique mechanism, to observe the work of the Commission of Inquiry (COI) which was set up at national level to investigate into alleged abductions, disappearances, and extra judicial killings. The mandate of the IIGEP was developed in consultation

with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and representatives of the countries nominating members to the IIGEP. The initial mandate of the Commission of Inquiry was extended in November 2007 for a further period of one year.

Sri Lanka also appointed in 2007, a Committee to inquire into allegations of abduction and recruitment of children for use in armed conflict. This Committee has commenced work and is in the process of making inquiries into alleged incidents, and is also taking steps to create an institutional framework for rehabilitation of released, rescued, and surrendered ex-child combatants. Sri Lanka has enacted legislation to make the recruitment of children for armed conflict an offence.

Sri Lanka is a firm supporter of the United Nations human rights system, and has been active in deliberations on human rights in international fora including the negotiations that led to the establishment of the Human Rights Council as well as the adoption of the institution building package of the Council. Sri Lanka made a substantial contribution to building consensus in the Human Rights Council as Chair of the Asian Group in 2007 and was elected as a Vice President of the Human Rights Council for one year in June 2007.

In pursuit of its commitment to the further promotion and protection of human rights, Sri Lanka voluntarily makes the following pledges and commitments:

- Sri Lanka will continue its efforts to strengthen its national mechanisms and procedures to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all its citizens.

- Sri Lanka will continue its active and constructive dialogue and cooperation with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen national mechanisms in all aspects.

- Sri Lanka will take necessary steps to enable the reconstitution of the Constitutional Council which will facilitate the strengthening and effective functioning of national human rights mechanisms, including the National Human Rights Commission.

- A Witness and Victim Protection Bill will be introduced in Parliament shortly. Suggestions in this regard from the IIGEP have been received and incorporated. The Commission of Inquiry has established an interim programme by way of rules for the protection of interests of victims.

- The Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights will launch a national human rights awareness campaign to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2008.

- The Ministry of Disaster Management and Human Rights will organize a regional seminar for parliamentarians on human rights related themes in 2008.

- Sri Lanka has commenced work on drafting a Human Rights Charter that will strengthen the human rights protection framework in the country and bring Sri Lanka's human rights guarantees in line with international obligations. The process includes engaging in consultations with community-based organisations, NGOs and members of the public. The draft Charter and the process of consultation will foster a national discourse on human rights.

- Sri Lanka will continue to work towards the submission of its periodic reports to treaty bodies including cooperating with OHCHR in drafting a common core document for use by all treaty bodies.

- As a part of its commitment to guarantee civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights of people, Sri Lanka will continue to align its development strategy within the larger framework of promoting local values and social protection for women, children, elderly and differently able people and vulnerable groups in society and respect to human rights and good governance.

- Sri Lanka, manifesting its commitment to promote people oriented development, will work towards the alleviation of poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 through continued investment in social infrastructure, education, and health services in line with the *Mahinda Chintana* policy (vision of H.E. the President of Sri Lanka for social and economic development of the country).

- Through mechanisms such as the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Human Rights, and the Consultative Committee on Humanitarian Assistance, Sri Lanka will continue to promote public awareness regarding action taken to promote and protect human rights.

- Sri Lanka will continue to take steps to safeguard and advance the rights of children through national mechanisms such as the National Child Protection Authority and the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment.

Sri Lanka will also continue to actively support international processes that seek to advance the rights of the child.

- Sri Lanka will continue to take steps that seek to advance the empowerment of women and women's rights and gender equality at national level through the Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment as well as other national mechanisms. Sri Lanka will, at the same time support international processes that seek to advance women's rights and gender equality.

- Trafficking of human beings, particularly women and children is emerging as one of the most urgent issues of today and involves the gross violation of human rights of vulnerable segments of society. Keeping in line with Sri Lanka's policy of open and constructive engagement with the international community and its commitment to enforce global standards, Sri Lanka will work closely with its partners to combat this heinous activity.

- Sri Lanka will continue its traditional role of consensus-builder and participate actively in the work of the Human Rights Council to make the Council a strong, effective and efficient body that is capable of promoting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all.

- Sri Lanka will continue to participate in the work of the Human Rights Council in norm-setting in the field of human rights.

- Sri Lanka will work with UN member States and relevant UN bodies to assist the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to formulate proposals for treaty body reform with a view to making the UN treaty body system more effective and in line with present day requirements of member States.

- Sri Lanka will work with UN Member States and relevant UN bodies for world-wide promotion and protection of human rights based on principles of cooperation and dialogue.

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Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

Financing arrangements for the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008

Note by the Secretary-General

1. By its resolution 61/280 on the financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the General Assembly appropriated for UNFICYP the total amount of $48,847,500 for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, inclusive of $46,587,400 for the maintenance of the Force, $1,943,800 for the support account for peacekeeping operations and $316,300 for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy.

2. Resources approved by the General Assembly for UNFICYP provided for the maintenance of 860 military contingent personnel and 69 United Nations police on the basis of prevailing support arrangements. However, in its resolution 61/276, the General Assembly endorsed the revised support arrangements for staff officers, based on the recommendation of the Secretary-General in paragraph 94 of his overview report (A/61/786) and the related recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraph 35 of its report (A/61/852). As a consequence, from 1 July 2007, staff officers have been provided with mission subsistence allowances, at the full rate of 81 Cyprus pounds per person-day for the first 30 days and at the rate of £C 45 per person-day thereafter, in lieu of standard reimbursements to troop-contributing countries for troop costs, resulting in additional requirements for the 2007/08 period for which no related provisions were made in the approved 2007/08 budget. Additional requirements are also attributable to the change in support arrangements for United Nations police, the recent revision of the salary scale for national staff effective 1 January 2008 and fluctuations in the exchange rate between the Cyprus pound and the United States dollar (July to December 2007) and between the euro and the United States dollar (from January 2008 onward). The additional requirements related to these changes are currently estimated at $4,027,700, of which $381,200 can be accommodated through the reprioritization of the utilization of currently

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approved resources for the 2007/08 period, resulting in additional requirements of $3,646,500 gross ($3,500,200 net) (see table).

Additional resource requirements for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Category	*Apportionment (2007/08)* *(1)*	*Total projected expenditure (2007/08)* *(2)*	*Variance* *Amount* *(3)=(2)-(1)*	*Variance* *Percentage* *(4)=(3)÷(1)*
Military and police personnel				
Military observers	—	—	—	—
Military contingents	18 900.0	19 807.0	(907.0)	(4.8)
United Nations police	1 150.6	2 723.0	(1 572.4)	(136.7)
Formed police units	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	**20 050.6**	**22 530.0**	**(2 479.4)**	**(12.4)**
Civilian personnel				
International staff	6 019.6	5 916.3	103.3	1.7
National staff	6 601.7	7 419.0	(817.3)	(12.4)
United Nations Volunteers	—	—	—	—
General temporary assistance	79.0	79.0	—	—
Subtotal	**12 700.3**	**13 414.3**	**(714.0)**	**(5.6)**
Operational costs				
Government-provided personnel	—	—	—	—
Civilian electoral observers	—	—	—	—
Consultants	—	—	—	—
Official travel	269.5	148.5	121.0	44.9
Facilities and infrastructure	6 547.3	6.764.2	(216.9)	(3.3)
Ground transportation	3 047.9	3 560.9	(513.0)	(16.8)
Air transportation	1 589.1	1 548.5	40.6	2.6
Naval transportation	—	—	—	—
Communications	958.5	936.0	22.5	2.3
Information technology	606.0	548.8	57.2	9.4
Medical	304.8	305.9	(1.1)	(0.4)
Special equipment	11.5	8.2	3.3	28.7
Other supplies, services and equipment	501.9	468.6	33.3	6.6
Quick-impact projects	—	—	—	—
Subtotal	**13 836.5**	**14 289.6**	**(453.1)**	**(3.3)**
Gross requirements	**46 587.4**	**50 233.9**	**(3 646.5)**	**(7.8)**
Staff assessment income	1 998.3	2 144.6	(146.3)	(7.3)
Net requirements	**44 589.1**	**48 089.3**	**(3 500.2)**	**(7.8)**
Voluntary contributions in kind (budgeted)	1 471.0	1 471.0	—	—
Total requirements	**48 058.4**	**51 704.9**	**(3 646.5)**	**(7.6)**

3. Accordingly, the projected revised requirements for the maintenance of UNFICYP would amount to $50,233,900 gross ($48,089,300 net) for the period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, representing an increase of $3,646,500 gross ($3,500,200 net) over the appropriation of $46,587,400 gross ($44,589,100 net) approved by the General Assembly for the maintenance of the Force in its resolution 61/280.

4. The additional resource requirements of $907,000 for military contingents are attributable to the revision of the support arrangements for staff officers, effective 1 July 2007, who have been receiving mission subsistence allowances at the rate of £C 81 per person-day for the first 30 days and £C 45 per person-day thereafter, in lieu of standard reimbursements to troop-contributing countries for troop costs.

5. The additional requirements of $1,572,400 for United Nations police officers are attributable to the change in support arrangements, resulting in the cessation of the provision by UNFICYP of accommodation facilities. As a consequence, effective 1 September 2007, the mission subsistence allowance rate was increased from £C 19 per person-day (with accommodation provided by UNFICYP) to the full rate of £C 81 per person-day for the first 30 days and £C 45 per person-day thereafter (for food, accommodation and incidental costs).

6. The additional requirements of $817,300 for national staff are attributable to the increased provision for salaries, common staff costs and staff assessment for national staff, based on the revision of the salary scale for national staff effective 1 January 2008, which, for the first time, is denominated in euros, based on a fixed conversion rate of 0.585 Cyprus pound to one euro.

7. The additional requirements of $216,900 under facilities and infrastructure are attributable to increased costs for utilities and maintenance services provided by local contractors, as a result of the fluctuations in the exchange rate between the Cyprus pound and the United States dollar (from July to December 2007) and between the euro and the United States dollar from January 2008 onward.

8. The additional requirements of $513,000 under ground transportation are attributable to the increased costs for the acquisition of a water truck, the urgent replacement of a sewage truck and the increased costs of fuel owing to fluctuations in the exchange rate between the Cyprus pound and the United States dollar (from July to December 2007) and between the euro and the United States dollar from January 2008 onward.

9. The additional requirements of $1,100 under "medical" are attributable to the projected increased costs of medical services in local hospitals and private clinics.

10. In connection with the Secretary-General's previous request for financing arrangements for UNFICYP for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (A/59/718), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in paragraph 8 of its related report (A/59/734), indicated that it was of the opinion that requests for revised appropriations should be made only in exceptional circumstances and, taking into account the relatively minor amount being requested, the Committee recommended that any additional requirement be reported in the performance report.

11. As at 31 January 2008, outstanding contributions to the Special Account for UNFICYP amounted to $27.4 million, which represents 59 per cent of the approved

budget for the 2007/08 period. Against this background, and bearing in mind the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Secretariat considers that the circumstances of this request are exceptional, owing to the fact that: (a) the additional requirements relate primarily to cash resources for the payment of mission subsistence allowances, national staff salaries and related costs, as well as payments to commercial vendors for goods and services; and (b) the budget of UNFICYP does not have the capacity to absorb the additional requirements, which represent 7.8 per cent of its total budget for the 2007/08 period.

12. **The actions to be taken by the General Assembly in connection with the financing of the Force are:**

(a) **To appropriate an amount of $3,646,500 for the maintenance of the Force for the 12-month period from 1 July 2007 to 30 June 2008, including an amount of $1,166,700 of the net appropriation to be funded through voluntary contributions from the Government of Cyprus, in addition to the amount of $46,587,400 already appropriated for the same period for the maintenance of the Force under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 61/280;**

(b) **To assess the total amount of $2,479,800, representing the balance of the additional appropriation, comprising the amount $2,376,475 for the period from 1 July 2007 to 15 June 2008 and the amount of $103,325 for the period from 15 to 30 June 2008, should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of UNFICYP.**